

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-10 and 13-23 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 10 and 21 are amended to distinguish over the cited references. No new matter is added by this Amendment. Support for the language added to claims 1, 10 and 21 can be found throughout the specification, for example at paragraph 28.

Claims 1, 8, 10, 18 and 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,790,211 (hereinafter "Seachman") in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0028475 (hereinafter "Shibahara"). Claims 3 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Seachman in view of Shibahara, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,916,483 ("Thompson"). Claims 4 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Seachman in view of Shibahara and Thompson, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,157,412 ("Deneau"). Claims 5-7 and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Seachman in view of Shibahara, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,840,647 ("Hayashi"). Claims 9 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Seachman in view of Shibahara, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,017,963 ("Tuhro").

Applicants submit that none of Seachman, Shibahara, Thompson, Deneau, Hayashi and Tuhro, in combination or alone, teach or suggest a fluorescent coating as an imaging background member in which fluorescent coating permits the dark color of the substrate to appear when the fluorescent coating is not exposed to a light source, and the fluorescent coating fluoresces or emits light in response to the exposure to the light source so as to appear white, as recited in claims 1, 10 and 21.

As a result of this recited feature, uneven edges, holes and other irregularities in an original document do not appear as unsightly black regions in the replicated image. Instead, these irregularities are substantially removed due to the fluorescent coating making these areas of the image appear white in the replicated image. See paragraph 28 of the specification.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that Seachman, Shibahara, Thompson, Deneau, Hayashi and/or Tuhro do not teach or suggest all of the features recited in claims 1, 3-10 and 13-23. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are thus respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3-10 and 13-23 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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